

# Taming a two-headed monster:



ArchivesSpace at Harvard

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# Where we began, circa 1999

HARVARD LIBRARY

**OASIS**

SEARCH & FIND   HOLLIS+   HOLLIS CLASSIC

Online Archival Search Information System

OASIS Home   Search   Browse

Se OA Sy per col des of drawings, printed material, and objects. For each

Search for:

and

and

Tips: [On searching](#)

**Working, please wait while page loads**

(close)



# OASIS

- Centrally-managed system to store and publish EAD finding aids
- ***Not*** a collection management system
- ***Minimal*** EAD requirements

# Where we are twenty years later

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Harvard Library HOLLIS for Archival Discovery page. The browser's address bar shows the URL <https://aspacepui-qa.lib.harvard.edu>. The page features a dark blue header with the Harvard Library logo and the text "HOLLIS for Archival Discovery". Below the header, there is a navigation menu with links for "REPOSITORIES", "COLLECTIONS", "DIGITAL MATERIALS", and "SEARCH". The main content area includes a search bar with the placeholder text "Enter your search terms" and a "SEARCH" button. Below the search bar, there are filters for "LIMIT TO:" (set to "Search all record types") and "YEARS:" (with "From" and "To" input fields and a "+" button). The page also contains three columns of text: "CONTACT A REPOSITORY" (with a right-pointing arrow), "EXPLORE MORE IN HOLLIS" (with a right-pointing arrow), and "ASK A LIBRARIAN" (with a right-pointing arrow). The footer of the page includes the text "Send Feedback or Report a Problem", the Harvard Library logo, and "Powered by ArchivesSpace v2.3.1". The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the system clock as 9:57 AM on 4/27/2018.

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

HA Hollis Archival Collection Guid... x +

https://aspacepui-qa.lib.harvard.edu

HA HOLLIS+ HOLLIS Classic OASIS Office 365 for Harvard About the Archives | ... Home - Harvard Univ... ArchivesSpace | Home Prize Winners | Prize O...

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**HOLLIS for Archival Discovery**

BROWSE: [REPOSITORIES](#) | [COLLECTIONS](#) | [DIGITAL MATERIALS](#) | [SEARCH](#)

*Explore collection guides, finding aids, and inventories to locate unique materials in Harvard's special collections and archives.*

Special collections and archives contain primary sources including letters, photographs, film and video, print items, digital materials, and objects.

Enter your search terms **SEARCH**

LIMIT TO : Search all record types Keyword YEARS: From To +

[CONTACT A REPOSITORY](#) ▶

Learn about hours, more detailed information, and specific policies for each location.

[EXPLORE MORE IN HOLLIS](#) ▶

Use the Harvard Library catalog to search for additional materials including rare books, images, maps, and more special collections and archival materials.

[ASK A LIBRARIAN](#) ▶

Can't find what you're looking for? Have questions? Contact an archivist or librarian for help!

[Send Feedback or Report a Problem](#)

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Powered by [ArchivesSpace v2.3.1](#)

9:57 AM  
4/27/2018

# What happened in between

**2009:**

Harvard launches Archivists' Toolkit

**2014:**

Replaced Toolkit with ArchivesSpace staff interface

**July 2015:**

Decision—replace OASIS PUI with ArchivesSpace PUI

# Harvard's ArchivesSpace community

- 29 contributing units world-wide
- 200+ staff users
- 6000+ finding aids
- 2 million+ archival objects
- Countless descriptive practices reflecting wide variance in staffing and work flows

# Task 1:

Migrate legacy finding aids from OASIS to ASpace staff interface

- Minimum data normalization *for ingest only*
- Automated and manual fixes to address local practices in conflict with ASpace requirements
- Many data modifications left undone

## Task 2:

Participate in ASpace core PUI development

- Conduct local usability testing to inform design and functionality
- Contribute programming time to core development



# July 2017

**“OASIS must go! (By July 2018)”**

- Software platform is no longer supported

# September 2017

Local ASpace PUI implementation begins

- Project goals:
  - Customize functionality
  - Customize design
- Tight schedule: October 2017 – May 2018 (8 months)

# The Big Challenge

## Conceptual leap:

“... moving from producing finding aids (as in a document with specific formatting) to having to put metadata of various types into a data model driven database that can then produce a variety of outputs, including a formatted finding aid.”

*Kari Smith, MIT*

# Project methods

- Extensive user testing with faculty, students, independent researchers, archivists
- Close consultation with User Experience Librarian
- Work done by local developers and designer

# User testing comments:

- *This doesn't look like a finding aid; we don't have finding aids anymore, I guess.*
- *Where am I?*
- *Too much white space – it's confusing.*
- *I just want a list of what's in the collection.*
- *Why can't I find what I'm looking for? What happened to Ctrl+F?*

What we did – a few examples

# Used the style guide for the Library's new web site for fonts and colors

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://aspaceui-qa.lib.harvard.edu>. The page features a dark blue header with the Harvard Library logo and the text "HARVARD LIBRARY". Below the header, the main content area is white with a dark blue navigation bar containing the text "HOLLIS for Archival Discovery" and "BROWSE: REPOSITORIES | COLLECTIONS | DIGITAL MATERIALS | SEARCH". The main content area includes a search bar with the placeholder text "Enter your search terms" and a "SEARCH" button. Below the search bar, there are filters for "LIMIT TO:" (Search all record types), "Keyword", and "YEARS:" (From, To, +). The page also features three columns of text: "CONTACT A REPOSITORY", "EXPLORE MORE IN HOLLIS", and "ASK A LIBRARIAN". The footer contains the text "Send Feedback or Report a Problem", the Harvard Library logo, and "Powered by ArchivesSpace v2.3.1".

Hollis Archival Collection Guid... X +

https://aspaceui-qa.lib.harvard.edu

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[Send Feedback or Report a Problem](#) **HARVARD LIBRARY** Powered by [ArchivesSpace v2.3.1](#)

# Moved navigation frame from right to left

Collection: Joseph Ishill papers... × +

https://aspaceui-qa.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/resources/1916

Search

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**HOLLIS for Archival Discovery** BROWSE: [REPOSITORIES](#) | [COLLECTIONS](#) | [DIGITAL MATERIALS](#) | [SEARCH](#)

COLLECTION Identifier: MS Am 1614

[CITATION](#) [REQUEST](#) [VIEW PDF](#) [CSV](#) [ASK A LIBRARIAN](#)

**Joseph Ishill papers,**

FOUND IN: [Houghton Library, Harvard Library, Harvard University](#) / Joseph Ishill papers,

SEARCH within Collection **SEARCH**

From year To year

**COLLECTION ORGANIZATION**

- Joseph Ishill papers,
  - I. Letters to Ishill
  - II. Other correspondence
  - III. Compositions

**COLLECTION OVERVIEW** **COLLECTION INVENTORY** **DIGITAL MATERIAL (18)**

Consists of correspondence of printer and publisher Joseph Ishill together with letters, manuscripts, and printed ephemera of various social and political radicals in whom Ishill was interested.

Dates  
1888-1966.

Language of Materials  
Collection materials are in English.

Conditions Governing Access  
There are no restrictions on physical access to this material.

Extent



# Added “Digital Material” to pillbox

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Harvard Library HOLLIS interface for the 'Joseph Ishill papers' collection. The browser's address bar shows the URL: <https://aspacepui-qa.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/resources/1916>. The page header includes the Harvard Library logo and navigation links: [REPOSITORIES](#), [COLLECTIONS](#), [DIGITAL MATERIALS](#), and [SEARCH](#). Below the header, the collection identifier is 'MS Am 1614'. A row of action buttons includes 'CITATION', 'REQUEST', 'VIEW PDF', 'CSV', and 'ASK A LIBRARIAN'. The main title is 'Joseph Ishill papers,' followed by the text 'FOUND IN: [Houghton Library](#), [Harvard Library](#), [Harvard University](#) / Joseph Ishill papers,'. A navigation bar at the bottom of the main content area contains three tabs: 'COLLECTION OVERVIEW' (yellow), 'COLLECTION INVENTORY' (blue), and 'DIGITAL MATERIAL (18)' (blue). The 'DIGITAL MATERIAL (18)' tab is circled in orange. To the left of the navigation bar is a search box with the text 'Search within Collection' and a 'SEARCH' button, along with 'From year' and 'To year' input fields. Below the search box is the 'COLLECTION ORGANIZATION' section, which lists 'Joseph Ishill papers,' and three sub-items: 'I. Letters to Ishill', 'II. Other correspondence', and 'III. Compositions'. The main content area below the navigation bar provides a description of the collection: 'Consists of correspondence of printer and publisher Joseph Ishill together with letters, manuscripts, and printed ephemera of various social and political radicals in whom Ishill was interested.' It also lists 'Dates' (1888-1966), 'Language of Materials' (Collection materials are in English.), 'Conditions Governing Access' (There are no restrictions on physical access to this material.), and 'Extent'.

Collection: Joseph Ishill papers... X +

<https://aspacepui-qa.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/resources/1916> Search

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COLLECTION Identifier: MS Am 1614

[CITATION](#) [REQUEST](#) [VIEW PDF](#) [CSV](#) [ASK A LIBRARIAN](#)

**Joseph Ishill papers,**

FOUND IN: [Houghton Library](#), [Harvard Library](#), [Harvard University](#) / Joseph Ishill papers,

SEARCH within Collection **SEARCH**

From year To year

COLLECTION ORGANIZATION

Joseph Ishill papers,

- I. Letters to Ishill
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Extent

# Added CSV download option

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Collection: Joseph Ishill papers... × +

https://aspacepui-qa.lib.harvard.edu/repositories/24/resources/1916

HARVARD LIBRARY

HOLLIS for Archival Discovery

BROWSE: [REPOSITORIES](#) | [COLLECTIONS](#) | [DIGITAL MATERIALS](#) | [SEARCH](#)

COLLECTION Identifier: MS Am 1614

Joseph Ishill papers,

FOUND IN: [Houghton Library, Harvard Library, Harvard University](#) / Joseph Ishill papers,

SEARCH WITHIN COLLECTION

SEARCH

From year To year

COLLECTION ORGANIZATION

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- I. Letters to Ishill
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Extent

# Harvard's ASpace landscape today

- ArchivesSpace PUI is live
- Next big steps: container management and contracting with developer to enhance “request” functionality
- Major lesson learned: ArchivesSpace is one beast, not two. Public services and technical services must work together at all stages of development.

Thank you!